STANDARD FORM NO. 64

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Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Fukien Airfields

TO : FE - Mr. Robertson

DATE: May 16, 1955

306.11a

THRU : FE - Mr. Sebald

FROM : CA - Edwin W. Martin

Bureau of FAR EASTERN AFFAIRS
ASSISTANT SECRETARY
Department of State

SUBJECT: Bombing of New Fukien Airfields

Ambassador Rankin reports in the attached telegram 803 (Tab A) that President Chiang believes that the new airfields being constructed by the Communists in Fukien Province should be bombed as soon as they become operational and that such action would be within the GRC's inherent right of self-defense. By implication, President Chiang's position is that as soon as Communist planes appear on these airfields and regardless of whether attacks are launched against the Nationalists from them, a situation would be created wherein the GRC could exercise the inherent right of self-defense specified in the exchange of notes of December 10.

It seems to CA that the clause "action of an emergency character which is clearly an exercise of the inherent right of self-defense" contained in the exchange of notes of December 10 contemplates a response to an actual attack on GRC forces or territories rather than to a threat of attack. On this basis a telegram to the Embassy was drafted on May 12 (Tab B) pointing out that a GRC attack on the Fukien fields prior to an attack by the Communists from these fields would be an action requiring U. S. agreement, and unilateral action by the GRC would violate the understanding contained in the exchange of notes.

This telegram, however, has not been sent, since Admiral Radford asked that it be held up until your return. He apparently felt that you might wish to review the telegram in the light of your recent conversations with President Chiang.

Attachments:

1. Taipei's 803 (Tab A).
2. Draft telegram to Taipei (Tab B).

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MAY 10 1955
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